

What is claimed is:

1. 1. A method of improving resource distribution to network-connected devices, comprising  
2 steps of:
  - 3 determining whether a requester of a resource distribution job should receive the resource  
4 distribution job by computing an earliest time when the job is available to the requester; and  
5 distributing the requested resource distribution job to the requester if so.
- 1 2. The method according to Claim 1, wherein class membership of a class of the requester is  
2 used in the determining step.
- 1 3. The method according to Claim 2, wherein the class membership is based upon a device  
2 type of a device of the requester.
- 1 4. The method according to Claim 2, wherein the class membership is based upon software  
2 installed on a device of the requester.
- 1 5. The method according to Claim 2, wherein the class membership is based upon one or  
2 more characteristics of users who may request the resource distribution job.
- 1 6. The method according to Claim 2, wherein the class membership is based upon one or  
2 more characteristics of a device from which the job was requested.

1       7.     The method according to Claim 2, wherein the class membership is based upon one or  
2     more properties of a network connection over which the job was requested.

1       8.     The method according to Claim 7, wherein the properties of the network connection  
2     include (1) a bandwidth of the network connection and (2) a cost of the network connection.

1       9.     The method according to Claim 2, wherein the class membership is based upon one or  
2     more characteristics of an environment in which the job was requested..

1       10.    The method according to Claim 1, further comprising the step of installing resources of  
2     the resource distribution job on the requester.

1       11.    The method according to Claim 1, wherein class membership of a subclass of which the  
2     requester is a member is used in the determining step.

1       12.    The method according to Claim 1, wherein computing the earliest time uses an ordinal  
2     number associated with a device of the requester.

1       13.    The method according to Claim 1, wherein computing the earliest time uses a current time  
2     in microseconds of receiving the request for the resource distribution job.

1       14.    The method according to Claim 1, wherein computing the earliest time uses a random

2 number.

1 15. A method of improving scheduling of jobs for network-connected devices, comprising  
2 steps of:

3 determining whether a requester of a job should receive the job by computing an earliest  
4 time when the job is available to the requester; and  
5 distributing the job to the requester if the earliest time has been reached.

1 16. The method according to Claim 15, wherein a particular one of the jobs comprises  
2 fetching inventory information related to the requester's computing device from that device.

1 17. A method of improving resource distribution to network-connected devices, comprising  
2 steps of:

3 determining whether a resource distribution job is available for a particular device;  
4 determining an interval over which the available job may be performed; and  
5 determining an earliest time in the interval when the job may be executed for the particular  
6 device.

1 18. The method according to Claim 17, further comprising the step of requesting that the  
2 available job be performed for or by the particular device if the earliest time has been reached.

1 19. A system for improving resource distribution to network-connected devices, comprising:

2 means for determining whether a requester of a resource distribution job should receive  
3 the resource distribution job by computing an earliest time when the job is available to the  
4 requester; and

5 means for distributing the requested resource distribution job to the requester if so.

1 20. A computer program product for improving resource distribution to network-connected  
2 devices, the computer program product embodied on one or more computer-usable media and  
3 comprising:

4 computer readable program code means for determining whether a requester of a resource  
5 distribution job should receive the resource distribution job by computing an earliest time when  
6 the job is available to the requester; and

7 computer readable program code means for distributing the requested resource  
8 distribution job to the requester if so.

1 21. A method of doing business by improving distribution of resources to network-connected  
2 devices, comprising steps of:

3 receiving one or more requests for resource distribution; and

4 processing each received request, further comprising steps of:

5 determining a class from which the request was received;

6 using the class to determine an earliest execution time for a requester from which  
7 the request was received; and

8 distributing the requested resource distribution to the requester if the earliest

execution time has been reached.

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